

Southwest Area Mentor Program Guide



**Maximizing the Possibilities.....
Investing in Our Future**

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Purpose:

- To establish relationships.
- To enhance opportunities for employees with the desire to learn and grow.
- To assist in organizational career development.

Goals:

- The desire to tap into the valuable resource of employees who have demonstrated the ability, potential, and desire to become successful in their organization.
- To instill in employees the desire to assist others in mastering additional skills, knowledge, or abilities in specific areas that will enhance their prospects for success.
- To provide employees an opportunity to expand in their careers.
- To aid in filling the void created by high turnover and an aging workforce, through mentoring with seasoned and experienced workers.



How the Program Works

Identification of participants:

Mentors:

- A mentor is one who facilitates personal and professional growth in another.
- One who provides guidance, direction and structure (balance) to place one on a successful path.
- A person who encourages, develops and reinforces acquired skills to achieve personal and professional goals.
- An individual who share their life experiences to include, knowledge, skills and abilities to enrich a relationship.

Associates:

An associate is an individual who is seeking out someone to provide guidance and direction to develop him or her both personally and professionally.

During the initial phase of the program, mentors will be solicited by the Mentor Coordinator and associates will need to fill out an application. Applications will be available at the orientation sessions or can be requested from your Mentor Coordinator. Employee's who are interested in being a mentor or associate should contact their Mentor Coordinator.

Supervisor's Approval:

To participate in the mentoring program, associates will have to request their immediate supervisor's approval. The supervisor is the authority to approve participation in developmental activities or deny participation for workload, budgetary or other appropriate considerations.

Matching Process:

The Mentor Coordinator will be responsible for matching the mentors and associates.

The matching process will depend on the following factors:

- How many mentors and associates sign up, on a first come, first serve basis. There will be no limit on the number of pairings.
- The associates preferences are on their career interests and goals (Example: A personnel actions clerk may be paired up with an ISD employee.)



As part of the launch of the mentoring program, a matching session will be conducted, during which, the mentors and associates will be invited to meet each other and sign a mentoring agreement.



Length:

A mentoring relationship can make long lasting friendships, however the Mentor Program can have a cycle of 6 months to a year. At the end of each cycle the process of picking mentors and associates will start over.

Starting a mentoring relationship:

The mentoring relationship will start the day of the matching session. At that time the Mentor and Associate should establish the following:

- Goals
- Objectives
- Plans
- Projects
- Meeting times and frequency

Note: A hardcopy Individual Development Plan for Mentoring Partnerships is available, upon request from your Mentor Coordinator.

Training:

Formal training opportunities will be dependent on available resources—cost, time and training spaces. On-the-job training and self-development are options that are suggested rather than formal training.

Program Evaluation:

The Mentor Coordinator will evaluate the program on a quarterly basis. At the time of evaluation, the administrator will request feedback on participants' experiences for the purpose of evaluating the program, determining the overall value and making recommendations for improvements.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a process that links an experienced person with an individual who is seeking out one to cultivate them professionally and develop their career.

What do associates want from their mentors?

Typical responses include the following:

Encouragement, support, honesty, candid information and advice, a "big picture" view, guidance, suggestions, an honest appraisal of their abilities, help with their "vision," assistance in making good choices, information on opportunities available, help in defining and reaching goals, the benefit of the mentor's experiences, availability without interruptions, honest discussions about tough issues, assistance in formulating a cohesive plan, help developing a network, introduction to key players, idea stimulation and insight to career paths.

What is the time commitment?

The amount of time varies depending on the needs, expectations and desires of the associate and the mentor. It is highly recommend that both parties discuss their expectations at the beginning and one of the most important factors is time. How often and for how long will they meet? Does one have a commitment at certain times that would make them unavailable? When is it okay to call? The greatest time commitment will generally be at the beginning of the connection, as the focus is on getting to know each other and on building the relationship. It is suggested that you meet at least one hour per pay period.

How long does a mentoring connection last?

The mentoring cycle will be six months up to a year; however mentoring relationships may end when the associate has outgrown the need for his or her mentor's guidance. A successful mentoring connection may be as short as one meeting or continue through retirement. Prior to the six-month or up to a year anniversary the mentor and associate should discuss what they have accomplished, whether it would be beneficial to continue and what to work on in the future. It is our desire that the relationship evolves into a strong friendship in which the two see each other as peers.



How many people can one person mentor?

There is no rule as to how many one can mentor, as each mentor must decide how much time they can commit to mentoring. Because of the time and energy needed to mentor effectively, we suggest that the mentor consider this seriously before deciding to take on more than one associate.

Are mentoring connections confidential?

In order to foster open and honest communication, the associate must be able to trust the mentor not to disclose their discussions with others. However, if both agree that communication with the associate's supervisor would be beneficial, the mentor and the supervisor may talk. Examples include helping to identify developmental activities and prevent problems associated with differing needs, perspectives and priorities.

***Note:** Intent to harm oneself or someone else or break a law can never be kept confidential.*

What if I find myself in over my head as a mentor?

One of the roles of a mentor is that of "referral agent." An associate's career issues may require more information than you have, so it's best to learn about other available resources. If your associate who trusts you comes to you with a problem more personal than professional (for example, their spouse has left them and the dog died), be supportive, but refer. In other words, know your limitations. You are providing professional guidance. Never try to professionally counsel someone having personal problems. It is a good idea to keep a referral list handy with telephone numbers that an associate may need.

Who is eligible to participate in the Mentor Program?

All employees are eligible to participate in the Mentor Program, as either a Mentor or an Associate or both. **Participation is entirely voluntary.** Participants may withdraw from the program at any time by submitting a written statement to the Mentor Coordinator.

For more information regarding the SW Region Mentor Program contact:
PMD, Southwest Area, Human Resources Development Division
Attn: Lois Vaughan
301 Marshall Ave, Bldg 302
Fort Riley, KS 66442
Phone: 785-239-0092 or email: Lois.Vaughan@us.army.mil



Individual Career Development Plan (IDP) For Mentoring Partnerships

Mentor: _____

Associate: _____

Short term goals (what associate plans to accomplish in next year):

Steps to take to meet short-term goals:

Mentor's suggestions/guidance for short term goals:

Steps associate will take before next meeting with mentor:

Med-range goals (1-5 years):

Steps to take to get there:

Mentor's suggestions/guidance:

Date Discussed:



SW Area Mentor Program Quarterly Evaluation For Mentors

1. Has your Associate been eager to learn, with examples.
2. How would you state the relationship between you and your Associate are so far? (Example: friendly, compassionate, professional, unavailable, available, etc.)

3. Does your Associate have a positive attitude? Have you seen a change in his/her attitude since the mentor relationship began? Please explain.

4. Has your Associate been able to integrate feedback and act on it? Please explain.

5. Do you feel that you have given support to your Associate and the Mentor Program to help him/her achieve their goals? Please explain.



COMMENTS:

SW Area Mentor Program
**Quarterly Evaluation
For Associates**

1. Do you believe your Mentor has ex
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perior in his/her function? Please

2. How would you state the relationship between you and your mentor are so far? (Example: friendly, compassionate, professional, unavailable, available, etc.)
3. Does your Mentor actively listen to your goals and assist you in achieving them? Please explain.
4. During the three month period, what projects have you started or completed to help you reach your goals?
5. Do you feel that you supported your Mentor and the Mentor Program, to succeed the goals set in place? Please explain.

COMMENTS:



SW Area Mentor Program



Associate Application

Please fill out application and submit to immediate supervisor.

Name: **Position Title:** **Division:**

Grade: **Series:** **Supervisor's Name:**

Time in Current Position: **Total Time in Federal Service:**

Why do you want to be a participant in the Mentor Program?

Please identify your anticipated goals and expectations from participation in this program:

Briefly describe your educational background including self-development activities:

Supervisor Only: Please reply and submit to the Mentor Coordinator by email or shotgun envelope.

As the above applicant's supervisor, do you endorse this employee for the Mentor Program?

Yes

☐

No

☐

If no, please explain why _____